

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 2, 3 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim 4 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-3 and 5-16 are currently pending. Claims 1, 11, and 12 have been amended. No new matter has been inserted. Support for the amendments to claim 1 can be found in claim 4; Figures 2-3; and p. 7, lines 21-28. Support for the amendment to claim 11 can be found at least in Figures 1 and 3, and at p. 13, lines 26-29. Claim 12 was simply amended for clarity.

The Examiner objected to the disclosure because a copy of Japanese reference JP-A-2002-225776 was not submitted with Applicants' Information Disclosure Statement. In response, a copy of the reference is submitted herewith.

The Examiner objected to claim 12 stating that the term "area" lacks antecedent basis. In response, Applicants have amended claims 11 and 12 in order to render this rejection moot. Applicants respectfully request that this objection be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 4-11 and 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Busby, US 6,029,990. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Busby discloses a transmission that is supported by the bicycle body and an input chain 36 which is exposed to the outside elements. However, Busby does not disclose or suggest "a transmission case attached to the bicycle body frame and enclosing the transmission" as required by claim 1. Therefore, Busby does not anticipate or suggest claim 1. As claims 5-8 are dependent on claim 1, they are also not anticipated.

As claim 9 contains the means-plus-function limitation "means for transmitting power from the crankshaft to the rear wheel", and as the transmission case attached to the bicycle body frame and enclosing the transmission is part of the structure providing that function, Busby also

does not anticipate or suggest claim 9. As claims 10-11 and 13-16 are dependent on claim 9, they are also not anticipated. Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 4, 5, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Busby in view of Kadaja, US 5,346,234. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As discussed above, Busby does not disclose or suggest “a transmission case attached to the bicycle body frame and enclosing the transmission” as required by claim 1. Further, Busby does not disclose or suggest a gear change pulley “covered by the transmission case” as required by claim 1, or “wherein at least one rotation body is supported by the transmission case” as further required by claim 1. Kadaja does not cure the deficiencies of Busby.

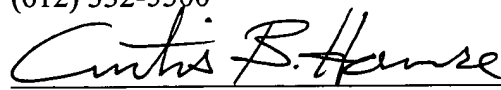
Kadaja discloses a case 36 that is made from aluminum, ceramics, or from plastic. However, the case of Kadaja does not cover a gear-chain pulley, as required by claim 1. Further, Kadaja does not disclose or suggest a rotation body supported by the transmission case, as further required by claim 1. Therefore, the combination of Busby and Kadaja do not teach or suggest claim 1. As claim 5 is dependent on claim 1, they are also not rendered obvious. As claim 9 contains the means-plus-function limitation “means for transmitting power from the crankshaft to the rear wheel”, and as the gear change pulley covered by the transmission case is part of the structure providing that function, the combination of Busby and Kadaja also does not anticipate or suggest claim 9. As claims 13 and 14 are dependent on claim 9, they are also not rendered obvious. Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300

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Curtis B. Hamre
Reg. No. 29,165

CBH:MED:kf

